

minimize the information collection burden.

*Type of Information Collection Request:* Extension of a currently approved collection.

*Title of Information Collection:* Medicare Geographical Classification Review Board (MGCRB) Procedures and Criteria and Supporting Regulations in 42 CFR 412.256.

*Form No.:* HCFA-R-138.

*Use:* This regulation sets up an application process for prospective payment system hospitals who choose to appeal their geographic status to the Medicare Geographic Classification Review Board (MGCRB). This regulation also establishes procedural guidelines for the MGCRB.

*Frequency:* Annually.

*Affected Public:* Business or other for profit, and not for profit institutions.

*Number of Respondents:* 1,000.

*Total Annual Responses:* 1,000.

*Total Annual Hours Requested:* 1,000.

To obtain copies of the supporting statement and any related forms for the proposed paperwork collections referenced above, access HCFA's Web Site address at <http://www.hcfa.gov/regs/prdact95.htm>, or E-mail your request, including your address, phone number, OMB number, and HCFA document identifier, to [Paperwork@hcfa.gov](mailto:Paperwork@hcfa.gov), or call the Reports Clearance Office on (410) 786-1326. Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collections must be mailed within 60 days of this notice directly to the HCFA Paperwork Clearance Officer designated at the following address:

HCFA, Office of Information Services,  
Security and Standards Group,  
Division of HCFA Enterprise  
Standards, Attention: Dawn  
Willinghan, Room N2-14-26, 7500  
Security Boulevard, Baltimore,  
Maryland 21244-1850.

Dated: April 26, 1999.

**John P. Burke III,**

*HCFA Reports Clearance Officer, HCFA Office of Information Services, Security and Standards Group, Division of HCFA Enterprise Standards.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Health Care Financing Administration

[Document Identifier: HCFA-R-209 and HCFA-R-245]

#### Emergency Clearance: Public Information Collection Requirements Submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

**AGENCY:** Health Care Financing Administration.

In compliance with the requirement of section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), Department of Health and Human Services submitted two Outcome and Assessment Information Set (OASIS) information collections to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for emergency review and approval. On January 25, 1999, HCFA requested OMB review and approval of the OASIS collections within 16 working days from the date of publication of the OASIS regulations. However, these information collections are still pending OMB approval. Therefore, we are publishing this notice as a means of notifying the public that these information collections have not yet been approved by OMB and are not yet in effect. When the clearances referenced below are obtained, HCFA will publish a notice in the **Federal Register**, announcing the approval of these information collections.

#### OASIS Data Collection and Use (HCFA Collection Number: HCFA-R-245)

On January 25, 1999, we published a regulation (HCFA-3007-F, 64 FR 3764) requiring all home health agencies (HHAs) participating in the Medicare/Medicaid program to collect data using a standardized assessment instrument, Outcome and Assessment Information Set (OASIS), for all patients. This requirement was in accordance with section 1891 of the Social Security Act, and finalized a proposed rule published March 10, 1997 (62 FR 11004). The goal of such mandatory collection and use was so that HHAs could improve the quality of their own services to patients. Mandatory collection and use by HHAs was to begin on February 24, 1999.

In order for this mandate to be valid, we still need to obtain appropriate clearances under the Paperwork Reduction Act. The completion of this activity has been delayed, thus delaying the requirement that HHAs must collect and use the OASIS data set as part of their comprehensive assessment process. Upon successful completion,

we will issue a notification on the HCFA Internet site (<http://hcfa.gov>) and publish a notice to this effect in the **Federal Register**.

In the meantime, we are not requiring HHAs to collect and use the OASIS instrument. HHAs that were not meeting the requirements on or after the February 24 effective date will not be held out of compliance. Of course, given that the instrument was designed to be useful to HHAs to assess and improve the care they furnish, they may wish to use the OASIS instrument for their own purposes.

#### Encoding and Transmission of OASIS Data (HCFA Collection Number: HCFA-R-209)

On January 25, 1999, we published an interim final regulation (HCFA-3006-IFC, 64 FR 3748) mandating that all HHAs participating in the Medicare/Medicaid program encode (that is, data enter) OASIS information in a standard format and transmit it to HCFA as a condition of participation. Encoding was to begin on March 26th and data transmission to the States on April 26th.

In order for this mandate to be valid, we still need to obtain appropriate clearances under the Paperwork Reduction Act, prepare and provide an individual Privacy Act notice for patients, and publish a Privacy Act notice of the existence and character of the OASIS system of records. The completion of these activities has been delayed, thus delaying the requirement that HHAs encode and transmit OASIS data. Upon their successful completion, we will issue a notification on the HCFA Internet site (<http://hcfa.gov>) and publish a notice to this effect in the **Federal Register**.

In the meantime, we are not requiring HHAs to encode and transmit OASIS data. HHAs that were not meeting the requirements on or after the above effective dates will not be held out of compliance.

Dated: April 28, 1999.

**John P. Burke III,**

*HCFA Reports Clearance Officer, HCFA, Office of Information Services, Security and Standards Group, Division of HCFA Enterprise Standards.*

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